

EBI

ELIMINATION OF BARRIERS
INITIATIVE



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF

Mental Health

OVERVIEW

Elimination of Barriers Initiative

Introduction

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS) has launched the Elimination of Barriers Initiative (EBI) to identify effective approaches in addressing the stigma and discrimination associated with mental illness. The 1999 Surgeon General's report on mental health declares that "Stigma surrounding the receipt of mental health treatment is among the many barriers that discourage people from seeking care." Furthermore, a 1996 public opinion survey conducted by Indiana University with support from the MacArthur Foundation found that a majority of Americans wish to maintain significant "social distance" particularly from persons with severe and persistent mental illnesses in all walks of life: at home, at school, and in the workplace. In general, stigmatization and discrimination contribute to the economic poverty and social isolation of many consumers. Such attitudes have a substantial impact on everything from mental health care penetration rates to support for public mental health services.

What is the EBI?

In keeping with the President's New Freedom Initiative, which is designed to promote the community integration of persons with mental disabilities, CMHS has developed the EBI to work with States and other stakeholders to reduce the stigma and discrimination associated with mental illness. The EBI is a three (3) year demonstration designed to test models and public education materials – including radio, television, and print public service announcements (PSAs) – in eight (8) pilot States around the country: California, Florida, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Wisconsin. After the evaluation is conducted, CMHS will distribute evidenced-based public education practices to States and communities across the country. The application of social marketing strategies such as these, which serve as the foundation of the EBI, has proven to be effective in shifting public attitudes and behaviors.

What are some of the EBI activities?

The EBI's objective is to combat stigma and discrimination, reduce barriers to treatment, and build public support for the principle of recovery as well as an array of accessible, quality community-based services. The EBI Team, a group of communications, mental health, and evaluation experts including the Gallup Organization, Vanguard Communications, and James Bell Associates, will work with target States and other key stakeholders to:

- Partner with community and consumer groups to broaden the reach of the EBI statewide;
- Convene a kick-off town meeting in each target State to engage a broad spectrum of stakeholders in a dialogue about stigma and discrimination and involve them in the EBI;
- Develop a portfolio of radio, television, and print public service announcements and other education materials that the target States can use in outreach to the public; and
- Build the target States' communications capacity through the delivery of communications training and technical assistance.



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
AND HUMAN SERVICES
Substance Abuse and Mental Health
Services Administration
Center for Mental Health Services
www.samhsa.gov

California Department of Mental Health

1600 9th Street ■ Sacramento, CA ■ 95814 ■ Ph. 916-654-2309

What are the target States' role?

While target States will not be required to provide matching funds as a condition of participation in the EBI, certain activities should be initiated in order to specifically tailor the demonstration public education campaigns to fully meet the unique communications needs of each State. Over the next three (3) years, with extensive and ongoing support and technical assistance from the EBI Team, it is anticipated that target States will engage in the following activities as needed to implement the EBI:

- Assist in the development of a strategic marketing plan that addresses stigma and discrimination on the State level;
- Develop a database of and build relationships with key stakeholders;
- Use and, when appropriate, adapt EBI materials in State and local public education efforts designed to reduce stigma and discrimination;
- Disseminate EBI messages to the public by gaining public exposure for the PSA campaign;
- Recruit and train a team of public speakers to give anti-stigma/discrimination presentations at schools, congregations, and community centers throughout the State; and
- Use the ADS Center Web site, already devoted to anti-stigma/discrimination education and information, as an intranet for information, materials, and dissemination.

What are CMHS's and the EBI Team's roles?

CMHS, working through the EBI Team, will develop, produce, and distribute public education materials to media outlets, partners, and the public throughout the target States. In addition, CMHS and the EBI Team will convene key public and private sector representatives, including the target States and consumers, in a National-State Partnership Committee that will advise on the strategic planning, implementation, and evaluation of the EBI. CMHS will initiate outreach efforts to major consumer, volunteer, and family organizations to encourage broad support for the Initiative. Finally, CMHS is committed to an intensive training and technical assistance program to maximize benefits from the EBI, along with a thorough evaluation to gauge the Initiative's impact in the pilot states.

For more information about the EBI, please contact Mr. Phillip Raskin, EBI Project Director, at 202-331-4323 or Paolo del Vecchio, CMHS, at 301-443-2619.